



Child or Young Person Protection Policy

1.0 Introduction

Ensuring the wellbeing and safety of children and young people, including prevention of abuse or maltreatment, is a paramount goal of North Harbour Rugby Union. This policy provides guidance about how to identify and respond to concerns about the wellbeing of a child or young person, including possible abuse or neglect.

- 1.1. The process for responding to a concern about a child or young person is attached as Appendix B.
- 1.2. The interests of the child or young person will be the paramount consideration when any action is taken in response to suspected abuse or neglect. This organisation commits to support the statutory agencies (Oranga Tamariki - Ministry for Children) and the New Zealand Police (the Police) to investigate abuse and will report suspected cases and concerns to these agencies as per the process in this policy.
- 1.3. The North Harbour Rugby Union's Child or Young Person Protection Advisors (CPA) will be responsible for carrying out the responsibilities outlined in this policy. Staff will not assume responsibility beyond the level of their experience and training. Our organisation commits to ensuring staff have access to the information and training they need.
- 1.4. This policy was authored by North Harbour Rugby Union on 27th October 2021. North Harbour Rugby Union is responsible for the maintenance and three yearly review of this policy. A digital copy can be found on our website at www.harbourrugby.co.nz. The policy is due to be updated on 27th October 2024. It is consistent with Oranga Tamariki - Ministry for Children and Police guidelines and will be updated when new guidance is issued.

2.0 Purpose, Scope and Principles

Our child or young person protection policy supports our staff to respond appropriately to potential child or young person protection concerns, including suspected abuse or neglect. While most NZR staff don't have direct contact with children or young people in the course of their role, this policy will at least be known to all staff and will provide specific information for those who will possibly have direct contact. It is our organisation's commitment to protect children or young people from abuse and to recognise the important roles some of our staff have in protecting children or young people.



- 2.1. This policy provides a framework and expectations to protect children or young people, including (but not limited to) staff behaviours in response to actual or suspected abuse and neglect. It applies to all North Harbour Rugby Union staff, including volunteers and part-time or temporary roles and contractors.
- 2.2. In addition to guiding staff to make referrals of suspected abuse and neglect to the statutory agencies - i.e., Oranga Tamariki - Ministry for Children and the Police - this policy will also help our staff identify and respond to the needs of the many vulnerable children or young people whose wellbeing is of concern.
- 2.3. We will adopt safe practices that act to prevent harm or abuse from occurring while children or young people are in Rugby's care. A list of these can be found in section 8 this policy.
- 2.4. We also commit to exploring opportunities to work with other providers, including from other sectors, to develop a network of child or young person protection practice in our community.

3.0 Definition of Child or Young Person Abuse

The Oranga Tamariki / Children's and Young People's Well-being Act 1989 defines abuse as:

‘...the harming (whether physically, emotionally, sexually) ill-treatment, abuse, neglect or deprivation of any child or young person’.

- 3.1. Physical abuse is any act that may result in physical harm of a child or young person. It can be but is not limited to: bruising, cutting, hitting, beating, biting, burning, causing abrasions, strangulation, suffocation, drowning, poisoning and fabricated or induced illness.
- 3.2. Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child or young person such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effect on the child or young person's emotional development. This can include a pattern of rejecting, degrading, ignoring, isolating, corrupting, exploiting or terrorising. It may also include age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children or young people. It also includes the seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of others.
- 3.3. Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities as well as non-contact acts such as involving children and young people in the looking at or production of sexual images, sexual activities and sexual behaviours.
- 3.4. Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child or young person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, causing long term serious harm to the child or young



person's health or development. It may also include neglect of a child or young person's basic or emotional needs.

4.0 Roles and Responsibilities of Staff

4.1. It is the responsibility of staff to:

- be vigilant,
- have knowledge and awareness of the indicators of neglect, potential or actual abuse,
- and to report any concerns, suspicions or allegations of suspected abuse immediately and ensure that the concern is taken seriously and reported.

4.2. North Harbour Rugby Union will have an appointed Child or Young Person Protection Advisors (CPA). This function will be held by:

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4.3. The appointed Child or Young Person Protection Advisor has three responsibilities:

- To know the decision-making process for concerns of abuse.
- To know the contact details of local Police and Oranga Tamariki - Ministry for Children.
- Record the details of the incident for submitting to Oranga Tamariki - Ministry for Children and to store this information securely.
- Consult with appropriate North Harbour Rugby Union staff if required.

5.0 Responding to Child or Young Person Protection Issues

5.1. All concerns of potential, suspected, or alleged abuse must be brought to the attention of a CPA at North Harbour Rugby Union.

5.2. If a child or young person makes a verbal disclosure to a member of staff, it is important that staff take what the member says seriously.

5.3. Staff are to listen carefully to what the member is saying and are not to interview them or ask too many questions, ask the very basics i.e. Who/When/Where?

5.4. Reassure the child or young person that they have done the right thing but make no promises, e.g. 'I will keep you safe'.



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- 5.5. Once the basics have been ascertained, no further questions are to be asked. What the member has said is to be documented, this should include time, date and who was present. This information will be passed onto authorities as soon as possible.
 - 5.6. Advise Oranga Tamariki - Ministry for Children or Police promptly via the CPA, ideally within 48 hours, when a disclosure is made. In case of an emergency, staff are to contact 111 immediately.
 - 5.7. Deciding when and who will inform the parent(s) and/or caregiver will be determined by Ministry of Vulnerable Children (Oranga Tamariki) and Police in consultation with the CPA.

6.0 Training

- 6.1. All staff will receive child or young person protection training at the appropriate level for their role.

7.0 Confidentiality and Information Sharing

- 7.1. We will seek advice from Oranga Tamariki - Ministry for Children and/or the Police before identifying information about an allegation is shared with anyone, other than the service manager or designated person.
- 7.2. Staff should be aware that under sections 15 and 16 of the Oranga Tamariki / Children's and Young People's Well-being Act 1989 any person who believes that a child or young person has been or is likely to be, harmed physically, emotionally or sexually or ill-treated, abused, neglected or deprived may report the matter to Oranga Tamariki - Ministry for Children or the Police and provided the report is made in good faith, no civil, criminal or disciplinary proceedings may be brought against them.
- 7.3. There are additional provisions made under the Privacy Act/Health Information Privacy Code that where there is good reason to do so, such as where there is a serious risk to individual health and safety (see privacy principle 11/Code rule 11), information may be passed onto the correct statutory bodies.
- 7.4. North Harbour Rugby Union will adhere to its own privacy guidelines on keeping documentation confidential and secure.



8.0 Safe Practise Guidelines

- 8.1. Adults should avoid situations where they are alone with a child or young person. While acknowledging that occasionally there may be no alternative, for example, where a child or young person falls ill and has to be taken home. In some cases, for emerging players where one to one coaching is required, this should always take place in an open environment, ideally with others present.
- 8.2. Any online/text communication should never be one on one, always include the child or young person's parents/caregivers in messages.
- 8.3. Communicate with children, young people and adults about Child Protection when running events that involve children or young people, to ensure they know who they can talk to about any concerns.
- 8.4. Adults at North Harbour Rugby Union and affiliated clubs/schools should model healthy, respectful behaviour to both other adults, children and young people.
- 8.5. Adults at North Harbour Rugby Union and affiliated clubs/schools must maintain appropriate boundaries with children or young people, such as not having or initiating sexual or romantic relationships with players who are U18.
- 8.6. If any form of physical contact is required ask the person's permission, explain what you are doing and why to both the child or young person and their parents/caregivers.
- 8.7. Where possible ask parents/caregivers to be responsible for children or young people in changing rooms. Always ensure that whoever supervises does so in pairs.
- 8.8. Where there are mixed teams away overnight, teams should always be accompanied by an adult male and female coach or helper.
- 8.9. If it's necessary to do things of a personal nature for a child or young person, make sure you have another adult accompanying you. Get the consent of the parent/caregiver and if possible the child or young person. Let them know what you are doing and why.
- 8.10. If you need to transport a child or young person alone have them sitting in the back seat of the car and take them directly home rather than detour to other places on the way.
- 8.11. Don't allow physically rough or sexually provocative games, or inappropriate talking or touching.
- 8.12. Ensure that any claims of abuse by a child or young person are taken seriously and that the guide to report suspected or actual abuse included as an appendix is followed.



- 8.13. Ensure that the nature and intensity of training and competition does not exceed the capacity of a child or young person's immature growing body and ability.
- 8.14. Ensure that use of photographic images and video are aligned to relevant privacy policies.
- 8.15. That the all people responsible for children or young people at any given time should always remain in an alcohol-free state, so that they can react appropriately to any situation that might arise.

9.0 Allegations made against members of staff, volunteers or representative of other agencies.

- 9.1. Allegations, suspicions or complaints of abuse against staff, volunteers or representatives of other agencies must be taken seriously and reported to the Child Protection Advisor who will deal with them immediately, sensitively and expediently within the procedures outlined in this policy.
- 9.2. It is not the responsibility of the staff to investigate allegations of child or young person abuse.
- 9.3. If the Police decide to undertake any criminal investigation then the member of staff, volunteer or representative of other agencies may be suspended from working with children or young people, without prejudice, as a precautionary measure. It is important that no internal investigation is undertaken, and no evidence gathered that might prejudice the criminal investigation.

Ratified by Sarah Perry (Operations and Participation Executive)

Signed: *Sarah Perry*

Date: 27th October 2021

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| Policy developed by: North Harbour Rugby Union |
| Date reviewed and adopted: 21 st October 2021 |
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| File location: www.harbourrugby.co.nz/juniors |



APPENDIX A: Definitions

Child or young person/Children or young people - any person aged under 18 years and who is not married or in a civil union.

Child or young person protection - activities carried out to ensure that children or young people are safe in cases where there is suspected abuse or neglect or are at risk of abuse or neglect.

Designated person for child or young person protection - the manager/supervisor or designated person responsible for providing advice and support to staff where they have a concern about an individual child or young person or who want advice about child or young person protection policy.

Disclosure - information given to a staff member by a child or young person, parent or caregiver or a third party in relation to abuse or neglect.

Oranga Tamariki - Ministry for Children- the agency responsible for investigating and responding to suspected abuse and neglect and for providing care and protection to children or young people found to be in need.

New Zealand Police - the agency responsible for responding to situations where a child is in immediate danger and for working with Oranga Tamariki - Ministry for Children in child or young person protection work and investigating cases of abuse or neglect where an offence may have occurred.



APPENDIX B: Steps for reporting suspected or actual child or young person abuse

ABUSE IS EITHER SUSPECTED OR DISCLOSED

- Ensure the child or young person is safe from immediate harm.

LISTEN

- **Listen carefully** to what the child or young person is saying **DO NOT** interview the child or young person or ask too many questions, ask the very basics i.e. Who/Where/When? Reassure the child or young person they have done the right thing.
- Once you have ascertained the basics **DO NOT** question them further. Document what the child or young person said word for word, include time, date and who was present, so you can pass this information to authorities as soon as possible. Report your concern to the NZR CPA

HOW TO REPORT YOUR CONCERN

- If you ever think a person is in immediate danger, call the Police (**111**).
- Advise **Oranga Tamariki - Ministry for Children** on 0508 FAMILY (0508 326 459) or **Police** promptly when a disclosure is made.

POLICE

- The Police have a dedicated team of investigators who focus on child or young person.
- Deciding when and who will inform the parent(s) and/or caregiver will be determined by Oranga Tamariki and Police in consultation with the NZR CPA. Report early so there is time to consider what's best for the child.
- Police and Oranga Tamariki will arrange interviews of the children or young people.
- **DO NOT** conduct an investigation of your own before making a report of concern.